



**State of Connecticut  
Board of Education and Services for the Blind**

**Testimony of Brian S. Sigman  
Executive Director  
Board of Education and Services for the Blind  
(BESB)**

**at the**

**Appropriations Committee Agency Budget  
Presentation**

**February 18, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.**

**Good morning, Chairwoman Harp, Chairman Geragosian, Senator Debicella, Representative Miner and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Brian Sigman. I am the Executive Director of the Board of Education and Services for the Blind, or BESB. I am here today to discuss the Governor's proposed biennial budget for BESB.**

**I have had an opportunity to review the budget document and would like to express my sincere gratitude to Governor Rell. Especially in these**

challenging economic times, the staff and constituents of BESB greatly appreciate her support for this level of funding that will ensure the continuation of essential rehabilitative services to people who are blind. The funding levels recommended in this biennial budget allow us to continue BESB's mission on a solid footing well into the future.

The agency is very pleased that this budget continues the historical commitment of the Governor and this Committee to providing equal access to education for children across Connecticut who are blind, deafblind or visually impaired. The Governor's recommendations allow the agency to maintain our programs to support people who are blind in seeking employment and to maintain the jobs they already do have. BESB will also continue to provide Independent Living skills to people of all ages including the elderly who so often struggle with the later onset of blindness.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to express our appreciation for Governor Rell's budget proposal that ensures the continuity of vital services for people who are blind within the State of Connecticut. We at BESB also very much appreciate this Committee's support over the years for our agency and its mission to serve the

**blind, deafblind and visually impaired throughout the state.**

**I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Brian S. Sigman, CRC  
Executive Director  
Board of Education and Services for the Blind**